

# Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month

May 1 - 31, 2021

The Civil Rights Division is recognizing Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month



## Employee Spotlight Eric Kim



Transportation Specialist, in Region 1, Projection Development Division

He loves to go outside and take pictures of nature, climb indoor rock climbing walls, and play board games with friends.

Joined TDOT Family August 2017

### **Tell us about a moment in Asian American History that influenced or shaped your career/life?**

For my career or life, I do not have a specific Asian history moment to mention, but in the past, many parents of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) struggled to plant roots in a place with a different culture, language, and prejudice. I reflect upon the resilience and energy it took for them to push on through and I truly appreciate the life that they have provided for our next generations.

### **Who within or outside TDOT has been influential in your career? Are they a mentor today?**

While working for TDOT, I have had multiple supervisors and mentors who have been very helpful for me to expand knowledge in my field. Currently, my supervisors, both Aubin Canning and Jay Morgan have helped me excel in my career in Design and they have been easily approachable for advice outside of the job as well.

### **Which of the TDOT Values (Stewardship, Integrity, Safety, Consistency, Development, Innovation, Collaboration & Family) that are listed within the Strategic Plan, resonates with you and with diversity? State why?**

Among the TDOT values, collaboration and family resonates the most with me. I believe all of us are given different gifts and experiences from our personal and diverse backgrounds. And despite our differences, teamwork only works and excels when we learn to appreciate and utilize those individual gifts together as a family.

### **Why is it important to recognize Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month, especially in 2021?**

Since the start of 2020, a rising number of Asian hate crimes and violence have been witnessed and the news planted fear and suffering for many Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) communities. To clear misunderstanding of who AAPI are, the Asian American Pacific Island Heritage Month opens opportunities to help bridge cultural gaps by being a part of different cultures. Moreover, the month helps people to understand and celebrate the beauties of all human diversities of the United States of America.